

ALASKA COUNCIL ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MINUTES
Thursday, April 21, 2005

Call to Order:

Chair Barb Simonsen called the spring meeting of the Alaska Council on Emergency Medical Services to order at 9:00 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions:

ACEMS Members in Attendance:

Barb L. Simonsen, Chair	Donald G. Hudson, DO
Ron Bowers	David Hull
Ken Brown, MD	Steve O'Connor
John Dickens	Karen O'Neill, MD
Charles Lean	

State Section of Community Health and EMS Staff in Attendance:

Deborah Jilly, Acting Chief of CHEMS	Zoann Murphy, Health Planner
Kathy McLeron, EMS Unit Manager	Shelley K. Owens, Health Program Manager
Martha Moore, Public Health Specialist	Doreen Risley, Public Health Specialist

EMS Regional Staff in Attendance:

Ronni Sullivan, Executive Director, Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.
Bobbi Leichty, Executive Director, Southeast Region EMS Council, Inc.
Dan Johnson, Executive Director, Interior Region EMS Council, Inc.
Kyla Hagan, Emergency Services Director, YKHC Region
Aggie Lie, EMS Director, Maniilaq EMS
Dave Potashnick, EMS Regional Coordinator, North Slope Borough Fire Department
Mike Owens, EMS Director, Norton Sound Health Corporation
Mike Motti, EMS Coordinator, South East Regional Health Corporation EMS
Terry Stone, EMS Coordinator, Kodiak Area Native Association
Skip Richards, EMS Coordinator, Chugachmiut Corporation
Susan Heck, EMS Coordinator, Kenai Peninsula
Teresa Seybert, EMS Sub-Area Coordinator, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation
Soren Threadgill, Anchorage Fire Department
Troy Dolge, Copper River EMS Council

Liaison Representative Members in Attendance:

Frank Sacco, MD, Alaska Native Medical Center and American College of Surgeons and Ken Zafren, MD, State EMS Medical Director, gave telephonic reports.

Guests:

Jon Thomas, Alaska Wildland Fire Medics
Walter Sampson, former ACEMS member
Matt Anderson, former EMS Unit Manager

Approval of Minutes:

Barb: Clarification to page six - Ronni Sullivan's report. Currently the medical center is four hours away from Copper River. "Medical Center" refers to Anchorage medical centers because Medicare won't pay transport from a clinic to a higher level of care.

MOTION: To adopt the minutes from the September 23 and 24, 2004 meeting [Don/Steve]

ACTION: Passed

Approval of Agenda:

Dave asked for a 5-minute discussion on the PERS system, to be added to New Business on Friday.

Charlie asked for a Burn Plan update. That item is on the agenda with Frank Sacco's report.

MOTION: To adopt the agenda for April 22 and 23 as amended [Steve/Don]

ACTION: Passed

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES, AND WORKING GROUPS

Executive Committee Report (Barb Simonsen)

Barb was to attend to all communications, however, letters have been sent to Lorraine Derr encouraging reappointment of Steve O'Connor and Ken Brown to ACEMS and asking Lorraine about the vacant positions, the application for Soren Threadgill's appointment and B.J. Coopes application for Pediatric Services Liaison. All necessary ethics reports have been filed. Invitations to this meeting were sent to the usual recipients.

ACEMS Liaison Member Report (Frank Sacco, MD)

Trauma system development included the Ketchikan and Soldotna hospitals starting the process for Level III trauma center designation and a review of the Bristol Bay hospital for Level IV status. A full report will be presented at the Trauma Systems committee meeting in May. Other activities include additional ATLS expansion courses in Southeast, at Providence and Alaska Regional hospitals, and at Alaska Native Medical Center. They are still looking for more instructors. There is a new Rural Trauma Team course in development for small rural hospitals; Mary Leemhuis & Dr. Sacco are going to Kansas to see how the course works and then will offer the course in Soldotna later in the year. Linda Smith is working on the Mass Casualty plans, especially the State Burn Plan, to provide all facilities with information on how to distribute patients and coordinate response activities. A tabletop exercise is tentatively planned for May. The Burn Plan will hopefully be ready in the fall. A discussion followed on HRSA grants, the Burn Plan, Head Injury Guidelines, trauma center designation, tabletop exercises, and the Northern Edge exercise.

Ethics Review (Barb Simonsen):

Information on the Ethics Act is available in the Board packets. If Board members have a personal or financial interest in an issue, they must recuse themselves from that decision. In addition, Board members cannot represent themselves as ACEMS members unless requested to do so by the Board. Members can't write letters, give interviews, quote themselves as representing ACEMS or make a reference to themselves as a member of ACEMS, if the purpose is to influence an outcome. Quarterly reports are filed on ethical issues and questions on ethical issues can be directed to Barb as the Ethical Officer for ACEMS..

CHEMS Section Report (Deb Jilly)

Regarding the current reorganization of the Department of Health and Social Services-Division of Public Health, the Section of CHEMS will remain as is. Deb Jilly will continue as Acting Chief of the Section. The Division will be soliciting applications for the Section Chief position, which will stay in Juneau. Deb Jilly will not be applying for the position; however if the position was moved to Anchorage, she would consider applying for the position. The budget for EMS is stable – no changes foreseen for next year. The Section's budget does reflect the \$70,000 for poison control and an FY06 Budget Increment Increase has been requested and approved.

Melanie White is leaving the Section's EMS Unit and we wish her well. Plans have been made to cross-train staff and develop a certification manual for future use. Candidates are being evaluated for the EMS Training Coordinator position; that person should be hired by June 1st. Alice Levy is the new Administrative Clerk in the Section and will support the EMS Unit. Reorganization of personnel in IT and Publications had proven to be a challenge, however web pages are now up-to-date. Publications, such as the Cold Injury Guidelines, were finalized, approved, and will be distributed as soon as possible.

Deb Jilly is working with Labor Standards & Safety – Labor & Workforce Development to identify strategies to facilitate community-based EMS. Currently, money collected for fines goes directly to the General Fund. One potential option being discussed is the use of fiscal penalties for emergency response and injury prevention.

Companies with minor to moderate violations could potential assist their community by supporting training, procurement of equipment, or other proactive support of awareness and education programs for worker safety. Would the Regions and local EMS organizations be receptive to the idea of recommending fund for equipment and training to which a company donation as an option their fiscal penalty?

The Division of Public Health is also working on emergency preparedness plans. Communication is the focus of the CHEMS plan and training will be scheduled to enable CHEMS staff to participate in larger state trainings. Deb Jilly suggested that the Alaska Health Summit could include safety and health training for healthcare personnel. This would help prepare personnel who are designated safety officers/safety coordinators as collateral duty. This would enhance emergency response capabilities during natural disasters, thus keeping responders safe and not becoming a victim themselves.

There is new funding for injury prevention that will be used to support an injury epidemiologist position for one year. This person will complete two focused program evaluations. The focused evaluations will assess one new program's implementation and one established program's impact (either community-based or statewide programs). Programs are still to be determined. Part of the funding will be used to broaden and enhance training for injury prevention specialists in the EMS arena.

Barb expressed thanks for her work as Acting Section Chief.

EMS Program Report (Kathy McLeron)

Kathy listed EMT certification numbers and discussed barrier crimes. The Rural AED Program application has been submitted we hope to get \$100,000 this year; the request includes for money for training. In 2004 purchased and distributed 102 AEDs and 30 trainers. National Registry will be moving to computer-based testing on January 1, 2007. We are reviewing the EMS regulations, including paramedic training, air medical and EMT training regulations. If ACEMS members have comments or concerns, they can bring them to Kathy for consideration. The Cold Injuries Guidelines are being used around the world. We're working on the burn plan and may try to do a tabletop exercise in May. The Medevac Course Manual will be published. The Rural EMS Agenda for the Future gives ideas where rural EMS is heading as a nation.

The CHEMS operating budget, Poison Control and Grants to Regions are funded the same as last year. The Regions have been flat funded for 14 years. Dr. Mandsager has suggested we show the programs that were funded 14 years ago and what is funded today. June would be a good time to have this prepared so that it can be advanced through the Governor's budget or by friendly legislators. There is a new bill in the Social Security Act to make improvements in payments to EMS providers in rural areas. More details will be forthcoming.

Health Clinics and Rural Health Issues Update (Mark Millard)

One of the areas of interface between the Primary Care and Rural Health Unit and EMS is the Rural Health and Rural Hospital Flexibility Project. Our mission is to support rural health infrastructure and systems that coordinate with hospitals. We're currently working with the Alaska Hospital and Nursing Home Assn. on a project to collect emergency room discharge data. We're participating in the work group discussing frontier extended stay clinics and looking at what is clinically and fiscally feasible to allow overnight stays. There are demonstration projects in progress.

Legislation (Shelley Owens, Martha Moore, Sue Hecks):

The ACEMS packets included a list of the current bills of interest; they are also posted on the CHEMS website. Updates were given on HB87 (the primary seatbelt legislation); HB12 (TVs and monitors in motor vehicles); SB100 and HB110 (911 surcharge bills that will allow municipalities to charge for E911 service); HB193 (licensing medical or care facilities). There are two bills regarding CPR/First Aid certification for high school graduation, but they are not moving.

Discussion on HB214 (Anatomical Gifts bill).

MOTION: To pursue changing line 15 to say 'law enforcement officer, paramedic, or EMT'. [Ron/Dave]

ACTION: Motion fails.

MOTION: To change line 27 to read ‘shall notify the local law enforcement & that law enforcement shall notify the procurement agency in the event a donation card or information is found’. [Steve/Dave]

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: To replace ‘notify procurement agency’ with ‘shall notify state troopers or local law enforcement who will then notify the state medical examiner when there is a known state donation card or donor information.’ [Steve/Dave]

ACTION: Passed.

MOTION: To change line 18 to include ‘medical clinic, mortuary, hospice’. [Don/Karen]

ACTION: Passed.

State EMS Symposium Planning (Doreen Risley)

The State Symposium will be held November 9-12, 2005 at the Egan Convention Center.

EMS for Children (Doreen Risley)

We’re in the final year of our 3-year grant. We’re supporting training at State and Regional symposia, disaster preparedness and a pediatric exercise in Anchorage last October and hopefully include issues involving children in Alaska Shield/Northern Edge in August.

Code Blue Project (Doreen Risley)

The final lists have been prepared will be distributed to the Regions for completion by the end of September. There is capital equipment and communications money leftover from the previous years; the communications money has not been reallocated.

Alaska Trauma Registry Report (Martha Moore)

Martha now has 2004 registry data from all but four of the hospitals. The goal is to have each hospital responsible for their registrar and possibly to submit data electronically. Martha gets about 50-75 requests for Trauma Registry data each year. Data charts for the individual Regions will be available online sometime this summer; notice will be sent out via the list serves.

Injury Prevention Report (Karen Lawfer)

The Injury Prevention Unit received a Stevens grant for \$248,000 to hire an injury epidemiologist fellow from CDC to work in the Anchorage office to look at ATV, snowmachine, bicycle injuries and helmet use. Karen has been accepted into a Social Marketing Program in Florida with Health Promotion staff; they are looking at coalition building in communities focusing on increasing physical activities and increasing safety in activities. Elder fall injuries are still a high priority even though the Unit did not receive the CDC grant.

Funding sources for the IP Unit include small federal grants, Medicaid money from Public Health, EMS for children, and Maternal Child Family Health which pays for the staff members. The unit is publishing a guide to parents for children going through the graduated/provisional license program and will continue to provide injury prevention topics at Symposium and the Health Summit. The Unit would like to continue using EMS responders, especially in small communities, to help with injury prevention activities. Zoann stated that the AK EMS Injury Prevention in the Bag program will end in August, but she will continue to look for items to distribute via the Bag recipients. Karen will order the CPSC fall prevention booklets for the EMS providers to use and distribute.

Public Information and Education Committee Report (Skip Richards)

Recruitment and retention has mostly focused on volunteers. A critical part of retention/recruitment might be better with a focus on management/leadership as well as support by local communities. There are National Fire Academy courses on leadership available. PI&E is recommending that a course be available at Symposium, as well as a local training curriculum for villages. PI&E identified three levels of training: Level 1: how to organize an EMS group, required paperwork, data collection. Level 2: conflict resolution, funding resources, data interpretation. Level 3: volunteer motivation, becoming an advocate, data usage. The slogan ‘Neighbor Helping Neighbor’ has been around for a long time; is it time for a new state slogan? Could we hire a professional marketing group for ideas? PI&E has done good work in recent years, including the posters for Symposium.

Thank you to Kyla Hagan of Yukon-Kuskokwim for compiling the data from the EMS Survey. There was a video of the Nome Volunteer Ambulance Dept which is also available on the Nome city webpage.

EMS Training Committee Report (Kathy McLeron)

The Training Committee approved the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons professional CPR course for EMTs and Instructors. The EMS Education program grant that Eastern Washington is sending to the Eastern Aleutian Tribes was approved for CME as well as the Providence Air Ambulance conference. The committee will evaluate speaker submissions for Symposium CME. The Scope of Practice document was also reviewed and a response prepared. There has been discussion of distance delivery of EMT classes; there are currently two proposals for this, but there are no resources to do distance delivery at this time. It is still a possibility for the future. The committee has discussed the issue of computer-based testing in Alaska.

Interior EMS Region Report (Dan Johnson)

After a hangar fire at the MAST unit, we worked with the Code Blue Committee to replace a great deal of their equipment, including radios. The helicopter diagnostic and repair equipment was lost but that was worked out and funding has been earmarked to replace the hangar. Dan reported on training in the region and the progress of Code Blue, phases IV and V. The IREMS program is stable with few significant activity changes each year. Dan circulated a chart showing the impact of flat funding, inflation and the employee cost index. The net result is that our buying power has gone down about 40% in that time. Staff has been reduced which shifts training costs to the communities who are suffering under their own cuts. A discussion followed about how to pursue increased funding.

Discontinuance of MICP Training by RNs (Dan Johnson)

At the University paramedic program in Fairbanks, students receive their clinical training at the hospital, mostly by nurses. This fall a nurse asked the hospital administrator to clarify the practice and the administrator sent the issue to the Board of Nursing. The Board sent a letter that RNs can't delegate skilled duties to a non-licensed person but didn't clarify the distinction between supervision and delegation. In the paramedic regulations nurses have been listed since 1985 as one of the medical groups that can train paramedics. The Nursing Board asked the Medical Board to remove nurses from the list but the Medical Board did not do so. There is a meeting of the Board of Nursing in June.

MOTION: To support the training of paramedics by nurses – not by delegating, but by supervising their nationally required skill sets for national certification. [Don/Steve]

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: To include EMT IIs and IIIs for teaching skills. Change “paramedics” to “prehospital providers including EMT II, EMT III, and paramedics.” [Charlie/Don]

MOTION: “During the Nursing Board meeting in June ACEMS will support the concept of nurses training prehospital providers including EMTs, paramedics, and health aides - not delegating, but supervising their required training sets”.

ACTION: Passed.

Alaska Shield/Northern Edge Drill Report (Kathy McLeron)

This drill will be held in August and will have statewide components. There will be between five and eight communities participating. Most of the drill will be tabletop exercises and emergency plan testing. She will keep ACEMS and the Regions apprised of further information.

Recessed: 5:00 pm

ALASKA COUNCIL ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES MINUTES

Friday, April 22, 2005

Call to Order:

Call to Order 9:00am

Further discussion on HB214 (Shelley Owens)

MOTION: "For the purposes of this bill, should it become law, 'designee' means the following: law enforcement or dispatch". [Dave/John]

ACTION: Passed.

EMS Medical Director's Report (Ken Zafren)

Ken continues to be a resource for medical directors across the state. He has dealt with questions about air medical evacuation, patient care, and regulations affecting search and rescue teams. He is involved in planning the clinical track for Symposium. The new process for processing expanded scope of practice applications is working well. He discussed the Rural AED program, the Cold Guidelines, and the National Scope of Practice document.

AK Land Mobile Radio Update (Joe Quickel)

Joe presented an update to the progress of the ALMR program and provided information and answered questions about migration to the system, interoperability, coverage, centralization of dispatch, funding sources, system costs, access to the system.

Commissioner Joel Gilbertson

Commissioner Gilbertson introduced Tammy Sandoval, Deputy Commissioner, Office of Children's Services. He discussed the current legislative session, which has many bills pending that pertain to public health and the Governor's budget.

Charlie thanked Joel for what the Code Blue Program has done for the services in Nome and across the state and addressed the need for training funds. Joel said the full amount for Code Blue is in the capital budget and he will be happy to assist in procuring funding for training. Dave Hull described how flat funding is a problem and asked him to look at how the Regions have produced many activities with an increased workload and fewer dollars. Joel said that 90% of H&SS programs are flat funded and he sympathizes with the difficulties. Ron Bowers was concerned with small communities not being able to fund insurance for services. Is there a plan for aid to small communities? Joel said that the administration is concerned with not only stabilizing but growing small communities and that the Dept. of Community and Economic Development is working on the issue. The Governor's plan for a community dividend program didn't pass last year but is still in the plan.

Joel gave many thanks to EMS from the Department. He is honored to have the relationship at the local level and appreciates the time and effort all in EMS put in. Ronni thanked him for the new five-year grant process and Barb thanked him for poison center funding, for keeping EMS as a section and for spending time with ACEMS. Joel said that the Department is looking at major personnel losses in the near future with many retirements in the higher positions. He appreciates the stability in EMS.

Public Health Division Report (Richard Mandsager, MD)

The Public Health Division is currently in a leadership transition. We are starting the recruitment process for the EMS Section Chief this summer. Dick wants to work on EMS grant funding strategies over the summer, with the goal of having a financial package to present to the Governor for his budget this fall. He discussed the Public Health Law reform bill and HB193. A question arose if EMTs would be required to undergo background checks. It was concluded that further study is needed on this topic. The EMS Section Chief position will be located in Juneau, not Anchorage and he shares the feeling of ACEMS that Deb Jilly has done a great job as Acting Section Chief.

Discussion included the issue of nurses no longer providing paramedic training, Southeast Medevac, and Medicaid reimbursement for patient transport. Barb Simonsen thanked Dr. Mandsager for his support.

Scope of Practice Issues (Kathy McLeron)

The Training Committee will meet and decide if they want ACEMS to take a position on scope of practice issues to be sent on to the Principal Investigator, Dan Manz. Dave Hull will not be at the next Training Committee meeting, but Rob Janik will report to ACEMS.

Regional Directors and Coordinators Report (Sue Hecks)

We discussed getting the state ambulance survey returns and quality control systems and the need for management training, including leadership skills, and recognition in the work for volunteer recruitment and retention. RD&C discussed the ongoing regulations project and how to achieve more regional input in the draft regulations before they get to the public comment phase. Certification suspension/revocation was discussed; also the concern that the ETT program does not have a central database, so that there is no way to check on the status of an ETT applicant. There are currently two Memorial Plaques and they are filling up fast. A question was raised regarding criteria for inclusion on the plaque and memorial webpage. The original intent of the plaque was for regional EMS staff, but it has developed into recognizing any EMS person in the state. A community should submit names to Southern Region, who hosts the plaque, and to the CHEMS office which manages the website. Should EMS personnel have the same recognition as firefighters when there is a line of duty death? Molly Ahlgren will be put on the firefighter plaque and the national EMS plaque.

Persons to be Heard

Walter Sampson from Kotzebue, former ACEMS member, said thank you to Aggie Lie and the rest of EMS for their work and dedication to public service.

NEW BUSINESS

PERS (Dave Hull)

Dave researched the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) which allows fire and police to receive benefits after 20 years of service. All others, including EMS responders without firefighting duties, require 30 years to receive benefits. Dispatchers were given the opportunity to join PERS, but would have to buy back 10 years' difference. There needs to be recognition of EMS provider risk in field work; this has been brought to the Municipal League's attention, but the cost issue is barrier.

Paramedic Licensure

There was a discussion of the current lengthy procedure to obtain paramedic licensure.

MOTION: To write a letter to the State Medical Board asking if it would be possible to expedite the temporary paramedic licensing process. [Don/John]

ACTION: Passed.

Membership Status

Ken's ER physician position and Steve's EMS Administrator positions expired in November 2004. Ken is interested in staying on ACEMS and Steve is interested in being appointed to the open consumer position. There are prehospital provider and consumer positions open and Soren Threadgill has put in for either the prehospital provider or the EMS Administrator position. Charlie's consumer position and Barb's Emergency Nurse positions are ending this fall; both are interested in continuing in their positions. There has been no response from the Governor's office on these issues.

MOTION: To write a letter recommending reappointment of Ken Brown as ER physician, Steve O'Connor in the consumer position, Charlie Lean and Barb Simonsen in their current positions, and BJ Coopes as the new pediatric liaison. [Steve/Don]

ACTION: passed.

Appointments to Task Forces & Committees

The ACEMS Planning Committee will be disbanded at the fall meeting. The EMSC Committee will be reorganized by Doreen as a separate advisory group from ACEMS. Currently only the PI&E and Training Committees are still active. The committees, their chairpersons, members and functions will be discussed at the fall meeting. Elections for ACEMS officers will occur at next year's spring meeting.

MOTION: To disband the EMSC Task Force. [Steve/Don]

ACTION: Passed.

Discussion of the Air Medical Services Task Group. The Alaska Air Ambulance Assn. was formed as a representative group and if ACEMS has questions about air medical issues, Mike Motti is in charge of it.

MOTION: to disband the Air Medical Services Task Group. [Steve/Dave]

ACTION: Passed

MOTION: To appoint Troy Dolge to the PI&E committee. [Steve/John]

ACTION: Passed.

Grants to Regions Process/Timelines (Kathy McLeron)

This year's grant award cycle timeline was discussed and the desire of ACEMS to be able to review the grant proposals next year. The State grant is now for five years, so future paperwork will be continuation forms, not the full grant proposal form. Dave Hull thanked the North Slope for its timely reports. ACEMS can make requests to the individual regions for copies of their grant reports.

REGIONAL DIRECTORS & COORDINATORS REPORTS

North Slope Borough Report (Dave Potashnick)

There have been budget reductions and a position was lost, however training continues with the help of an MPRA grant that will send medevac personnel to Anchorage for internships. There is a Homeland Security grant to develop two-way real time communications between the villages and the hospital in Barrow. The Code Blue Phase IV grant will be spent. Standing orders and protocols are completed. Two Bell 412 helicopters have been acquired, but they haven't yet replaced the Lear Jet. There were 2000 calls across the Slope last year, with 1000 calls in Barrow. The Borough is looking at billing for ambulance calls in Barrow to reduce the number of calls. Some public education has also been done to help reduce non-emergency ambulance calls.

Southeast Region Report (Bobbi Leichty)

Skagway had a save with an AED and was honored as EMS Service of the Year. Code Blue has provided new ambulances for Skagway, Haines, and Petersburg. Gregory Wong is the new assistant training coordinator, and Arlene Fazzini is the financial manager. SEREMS has been collecting every runsheet in SE since 2001; 34 communities have contributed full run sheets, but Ketchikan, Sitka, and Juneau use different software, and don't have the capability to share data. There is a definite need to get the larger communities incorporated into the data collection system. The data collection project is starting to see trends. The cardiac arrest registry includes every cardiac runsheet since 1999, except Juneau. If there is no increase in funding, there will be a reduction in staff and the data project will have to be put on hold. Symposium was a moderate success, but there were many compliments on the quality of clinical instructors at the ALS level. During the Medical Directors' meeting many ideas were shared about what the doctors need to support their roles and information from this meeting will be sent to Kathy McLeron. There are now two medevac jets in Ketchikan; one from Guardian and one from Airlift Northwest. A radio tower was placed in Sitka with \$248,000 in Code Blue funding. There is still a need for expertise to help communities with communications issues. SEREMS has changed its management strategies to support staff contact with each community every four weeks. Sitka, Juneau, and Ketchikan have all lost EMS leadership positions. Bobbi and Dr. Copass will be meeting with the chiefs to discuss EMS reorganizations. Bobbi described the Naukati success story with Claire King in command of the new volunteer EMS squad there. The line of duty death in Sitka brought up liability issues for EMS responders. Many Sitka volunteers have left the service. There was a discussion about the issue of sick cruise ship passengers being put off the ships and overloading local resources.

Southern Region Report (Ronni Sullivan)

The change in the this year created some difficulties with the planned calendar, but the final package will be ready on time. There are currently 99 ambulance and first responder services in the region. Staff changes include Chuck Wengenroth leaving in December and the hiring of Brian Webb. There is a contract with the state to develop a basic level curriculum for bioterrorism for EMTs. Karen Peterson is celebrating her 20-year anniversary at SREMSC. Symposium planning is in progress with the Egan Center and Hilton Hotel contracts finalized. There is a new paramedic program at Kenai Peninsula College which is looking to provide university

credits. EMS Day at the Legislature was successful; the directors met with the Commissioner and Dr. Mandsager. The region-wide needs assessment became the Code Blue list for next year, and the information has been forwarded to the Code Blue Steering Committee. Rep. Cissna is very supportive of EMS and, at her request, Ronni testified at the legislative health caucuses. An EMS health caucus was held in March which focused on EMS on the Kenai Peninsula; Sue Hecks testified and did a very good job. All the Regional directors were in Anchorage for the video conference and there have been calls from legislators since the health caucus. Thanks to all involved in the opportunities to raise awareness of EMS whenever possible.

MOTION: To write a letter to Karen Peterson at SREMSC to thank her for 20 years of service to EMS and for her work on the EMS Symposium. [Dave/Ron]

ACTION: Passed.

Maniilaq Association Report (Aggie Lie)

The medevac program in 2003 did 167 medevacs; in 2004 there were 300 medevacs and Maniilaq is expecting 400+ in 2005. They are currently billing 911 calls and the collection rate is 86%. Training levels have gone down. Maniilaq lost one of its paramedics but is advertising for a new one. Maniilaq hospital will become a Critical Care Access hospital. EMS Week activities included an open house at the medevac hanger and barbecue. The increase in medevacs may be due in part to the telemedicine system; physicians are better able to assess patients and are being more assertive in getting patients into the hospital. Other reasons for the increase in medevacs include the development of a reliable system with a dedicated airplane and staff, new policies and procedures, the physicians are more comfortable with the idea of medevacs, shorter response times, and consolidation of operations. Aggie will bring in the results of a small study that was done. Some medevacs are now flying directly from the village into Anchorage.

Norton Sound Report (Mike Owens)

Medevac numbers are up from 300 last year to over 400 this year. The percentages of calls are: 40-45% medical, 15-16% OB, 30% trauma, and 5-8% psychiatric patients-intentional injuries or psychiatric emergencies. There isn't an abuse of the medevac system in Norton Sound. The Health Aide program is a big user of the training system with Dr. O'Neill being a big supporter of training health aides as EMTs. Code Blue projects continue. Military helicopters are still out of the region and two calls were delayed due to the lack of military helicopters.

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (Kyla Hagan)

Kyla Hagan is the new EMS Director, her background is in public health epidemiology. Other staff includes Bill O'Brien, John Dickens, EMS Instructors, and Jeff Hollabaugh as EMS Instructors and Code Blue/Rural AED program coordinator, Grant Funk-EMS Instructor, and Teresa Markham-Injury Prevention Educator. Fred Watson is now the Toksook Bay subregional director. Toksook Bay has a new transport vehicle, purchased with Code Blue funds. Code Blue Phase III purchases are complete. Phase IV purchases will include communications equipment (mobile phones with wide range) and transport vehicles. Phase V purchases will be basic equipment for health aides and clinics. Injury prevention activities include the Gun Safe project which is distributing approximately 300 gun safes to two large villages. Other activities include bike helmets, Safety Shop, and Kids Don't Float. EMS and IP staff have been cross-training in both fields. Barb welcomed Kyla to ACEMS.

ACTION ITEMS

- *MOTION:* To draft a letter thanking the Commissioner and Governor for their support of poison center funding. [John/Dave]
FRIENDLY AMENDMENT: Include Dr. Mandsager in thank you.
ACTION: Passed.
- There will be a presentation to Dr. Mandsager in June on the possibility that Department of Labor/OSHA fines can be paid to local communities/EMS organizations. Ronni and Deborah are working on this, with Barb and Dave assisting. They will gather input from ACEMS via email and Barb will share the information gathered with the rest of ACEMS.
- Hospital ED Discharge data. Alice Rarig is working on this issue; there is no need for ACEMS effort.

- Increased funding for EMS. The Regions and Deborah will put together a presentation for Dr. Mandsager on the effects of flat funding on EMS at the region and state levels before June, and will report to ACEMS at the fall meeting. Barb will represent ACEMS. Information will be shared via email and phone calls.
- HB214. ACEMS through Sue Hecks will continue to work on the wording change. Dr. Mandsager was informed of ACEMS concerns.
- EMS comment on regulations. Kathy stated that draft copies of regulation changes cannot be sent out prior to the public comment period. Key stakeholders, such as the Training Committee can meet and discuss a projected (on screen) version. Kathy will get written clarification on the issue from Elmer Lindstrom.
- Background checks for ETTs. There is no state certification process for ETTs and ACEMS is only responsible for certified EMS personnel. No action for ACEMS.
- Memorial Plaque. There is a need for a set of minimum criteria for placement of names on the plaque. Line of duty deaths should have a higher priority. Ronni, Zoann and Dave Hull will work on criteria clarification for the fall meeting.
- EMS line of duty death recognition. After Molly Ahlgren's death, Kathy called the Governor's office to request that flags be lowered, but doesn't know of procedures for EMS line of duty death recognition. Dave will find out if it can include EMS line of duty deaths. He proposed developing a protocol for the future.
- ACEMS will write a letter to the Medical Board on nurses training EMTs and paramedics and Barb will testify to the Nursing Board in June on this issue.
- *MOTION*: To send a letter to Mark Barker who is retiring from the Fire Marshal's office, thanking him for his contributions to the Training Committee. [Steve/Dave]
ACTION: Passed.
- Karen asked if there was anything ACEMS can do to help the Cold Injury Guidelines get out of the publications system. Deborah is working on this issue.
- ACEMS will write a letter to Senator Ted Stevens in support of EMSC funding. Doreen also asked for individual letters of support from ACEMS and the Regions.
- *MOTION*: To write a letter to Melanie White thanking her for over 25 years of service, dedication, and professionalism to the EMS system. She has been a great asset to EMS in Alaska. [John/Ron]
ACTION: Passed.
- Grant Process. Kathy reported that next year's grant process will occur earlier than this year. Records will become available for public review once the Commissioner makes the decision to award the grants. Reports will be sent to ACEMS early in June. Regions can send reports to ACEMS members anytime. ACEMS requested to have reports sent to them prior to next spring's meeting.

Dates for next meeting The meeting will be held in Anchorage at the Southern Region EMS office. ACEMS: September 22-23, 2005; Regional Directors & Coordinators and Committee meetings: September 20-21, 2005
Adjourned: 5:05 pm